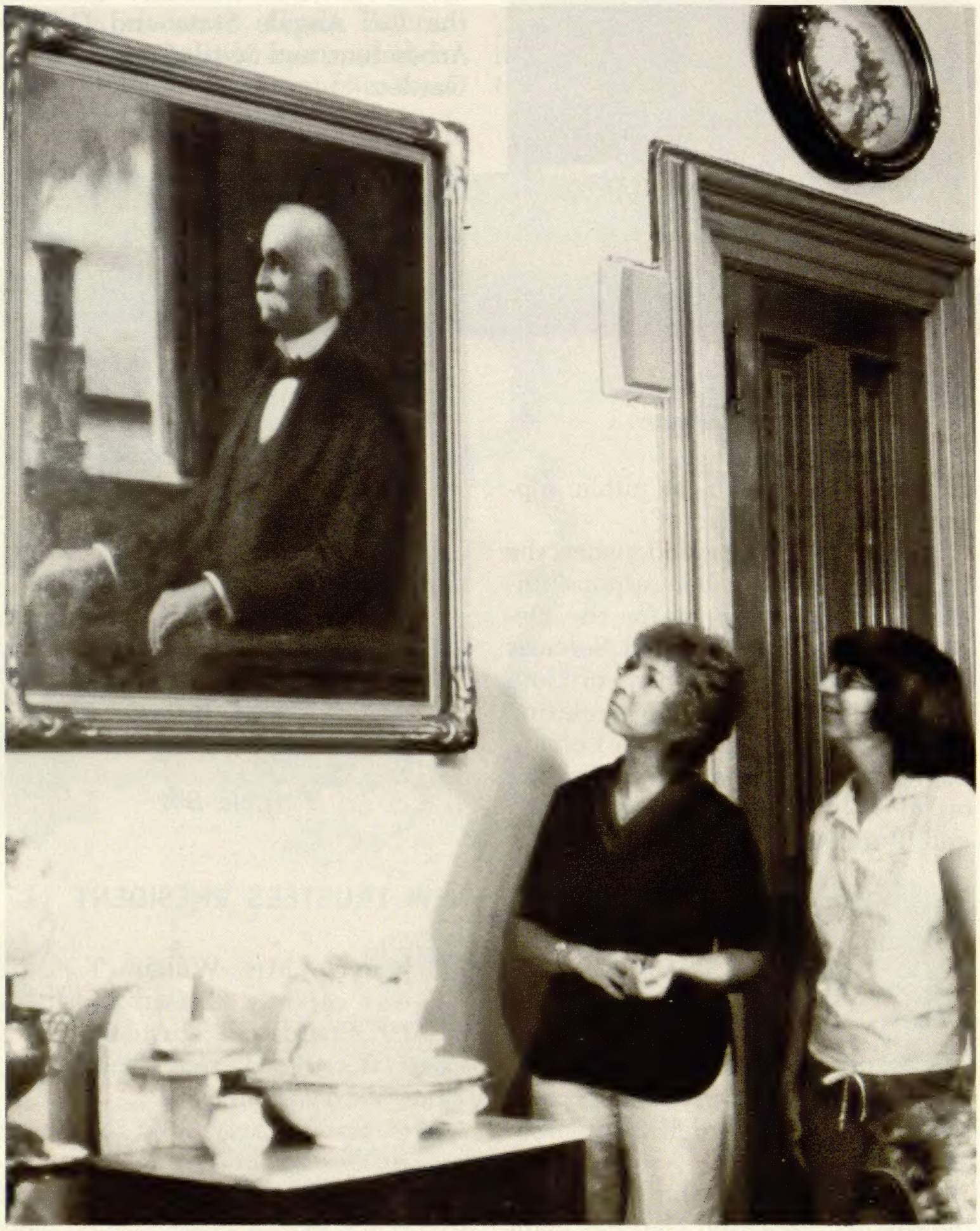
September/October, 1979

Lasca Leaves

Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens



LuAnn Munns

A recently acquired portrait of E. J. Baldwin hangs in the bedroom of the Queen Anne Cottage. Sandy Snider (left), Department historian, and Margaret (Mrs. Dennis) Page, 1978 Las Voluntarias history chairman, admire the painting by Joseph Greenbaum.

PAINTING DONATED

A VALUABLE OIL PAINTING by Joseph Greenbaum has been added to the collection of historical art in the Queen Anne Cottage. One of the newest appointees to the Board of Governors, Ruth E. Best, was instrumental in obtaining the portrait of E. J. Baldwin for the Arboretum.

The artist was a popular portrait painter in the early years of the 20th century who studied in San Francisco, Munich, and Paris before moving to Los Angeles permanently in 1906. Although Mr. Greenbaum spent much of his time painting portraits of prominent Californians, he was best known for his landscapes of Catalina, Brittany, and the deserts of the southwestern United States. The Baldwin portrait is painted in typical Greenbaum style with a white haired Baldwin posed beside an urn. In the background is a landscape described by the *Los Angeles Times* at the time the painting was finished as "a shady landscape with trees through whose foliage is glimpsed an arabesque of sky."

Anita Baldwin, E. J. Baldwin's daughter, was a patron of California artists and probably commissioned Mr. Greenbaum to paint this portrait, along with those of several other family members, in the period between 1911 and 1913. It hung for many years in the Pasadena home of Mr. Baldwin's grandson, Baldwin McClaughry Baldwin.

Mrs. S. T. Senseman acquired the painting when he sold the home to

her. The painting, appraised at $5,000, came onto the market when the home was sold again recently. Mrs. Best learned of its availability and through an intermediary persuaded Mrs. Senseman to donate the painting to the Arboretum Foundation. It is now displayed on the north wall of the bedroom in the Queen Anne Cottage.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS PRESIDENT

LESLEE BOWMAN was elected president of the Board of Governors of the Los Angeles County Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens for the coming year beginning July 1, 1979. Outgoing president, F. Harold Roach, officially turned the presidential gavel over to her at the May 8 meeting.

Mrs. Bowman was especially pleased to be appointed to the 15 member Board five years ago by Supervisor Baxter Ward, because she has been interested in Los Angeles area botanical institutions most of her life. The native New Yorker was introduced to public gardens by way of Descanso Gardens during Sunday drives with her family while the Gardens were still the Manchester Boddy estate. Since she was only five years old when she arrived with her family in California, she said she can't remember a time in her life when she didn't know about Descanso Gardens. "That has always been my favorite place in all of Southern California," she said.

Mrs. Bowman takes over the leadership of the Board at what she considers a challenging period in Department history.

"Our greatest challenge now is to overcome the disaster of Proposition 13," she said. "It has ravaged the Department as far as finances and morale are concerned."

Although she understands the necessity of maintaining required county services, Mrs. Bowman feels the Department gardens are too important to the people of Los Angeles County for the supervisors to ignore.

"It is all too tempting for them to concentrate on mandated services and let cultural programs go," she said. "But if only one-quarter of the people who appreciate the Gardens would write letters to the editor or to their supervisors, the supervisors would get an idea of the public support the Gardens have."

Frank Simerly

Leslee Bowman

During the rare periods when she has free time from her responsibilities as a commissioner for the Department for Public Social Services and president of the Board of Governors, Mrs. Bowman enjoys relaxing at her two homes in the San Fernando Valley. There she can concentrate on her hobbies of raising bromeliads and Burmese and Siamese cats.

PLANT SALE

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Camellia Council will hold a plant sale at Descanso Gardens September 15 and 16.

Camellias formed the nucleus of the original Descanso Gardens plant collection, and it is appropriate that they will be the main attraction at the sale. Other shade loving plants such as azaleas and clivias will also be available with the primary emphasis on varieties and species of plants difficult for the home gardener to obtain.

Judy Simmons, president of the Council, expects the plant sale to contribute appreciably to the Council's ability to continue its support of Descanso Gardens. Past support included assistance in maintaining trams for the public tour, replacement of badly needed garden equipment, and purchase of supplies.

Profits will be used to assist Descano Gardens with budgeted projects and to support the annual camellia shows at Descanso Gardens, the Los Angele State and County Arboretum, and South Coast Botanic Garden.

Patricia Box

NEW TRUSTEES PRESIDENT

PATRICIA (Mrs. William T.) Box was recently elected president of the Board of Trustees, South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation, Palos Verdes Peninsula.

Mrs. Box has served on the Board of Trustees of the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation for the past five years, first as membership chairman and lately as development chairman. She had previously served for 10 years on the Board of Directors, Women's Council, Los Angeles

Area Chamber of Commerce and on the board of Los Angeles Beautiful.

A native of Los Angeles, Mrs. Box is a graduate of both Immaculate Heart College and the University of Southern California. She and her husband have been residents of Rolling Hills Estates since 1973.

FIESTA DE FLORES

Fiesta de Flores, the major annual fund raising event at South Coast Botanic Gardens, was a great success despite problems brought on by the gasoline shortage, according to Fiesta chairman, Cindy Peters.

Exotic bromeliads, many of them rarely available to the public, were great favorites as were named pelargoniums.

Hard work by Foundation members inspired a good turnout at the Preview Party Saturday night. On the day of the sale about 3,000 people apparently could not resist the chance to buy specimens from the collection of unusual plants and to perhaps win one of the numerous raffle prizes.

The sale grossed over $23,000 with the profits earmarked for continued support of construction of Horticultural Hall and to make regular payments on the Garden's obligation to the County. Another goal is to supplement the budget to offset reductions in revenue due to tax reductions.

Randy Bynum

A preview party prior to the Fiesta de Flores May 20 drew a large crowd of South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation members and their guests.

LAS VOLUNTARIAS HEAD

Nancy (Mrs. James) Anderson has assumed her duties as president of Las Voluntarias after installation ceremonies at the May meeting.

A longtime interest in people, gardening, and teaching led Mrs. Anderson to join the Arboretum volunteer group about five years ago. During subsequent years, she has served as membership chairman and first vice-president.

Don Dimond

Nancy Anderson

"People are one of my biggest interests," Mrs. Anderson said, "and the Arboretum is a fun place to be because of the personnel."

Although Mrs. Anderson's formal teaching career came to an end when she began raising a family, she continues to use her skills in dealing with young people as a school field trip leader at the Arboretum. The time she spends explaining the history of the Arboretum grounds and buildings to elementary school groups is exciting to her because the students are so receptive. "The enthusiasm of the children makes each tour an adventure," she said.

Mrs. Anderson has lived in Arcadia for 28 years with her husband, a local physician, and her three sons. Besides her work with Las Volun-

tarias, she is active in the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation.

Other officers installed at the May meeting include Jean (Mrs. H. James) O'Toole, first vice-president; Jo (Mrs. Herbert) Iske, second vice-president; and Joan (Mrs. David) Malafronte, secretary.

DESCANSO GUILD HONORED

The Descanso Gardens Guild has been honored with the Les Tupper Community Service Award given by the La Canada Flintridge Coordinating Council.

The award is made annually to individuals and organizations that have contributed years of leadership and service to the La Canada Flintridge community.

Last year, Guild members donated 26,000 man-hours to services promoting public use and enjoyment of Descanso Gardens. The most demanding project was the annual Christmas decorations show which required the work of 900 volunteers during the 1978 show with additional time spent preparing for it. About 23,000 persons attended during the 10 day show, getting inspiration for decorating their own homes for the Christmas holidays.

Other annual events sponsored by the Guild included the Mary Wills flower show and the arts and crafts show featuring crafts demonstrations, music, gourmet food, and participation by more than 100 artists.

Throughout the year, volunteers staff docent tours, a speakers' bureau, the reference library, the Hospitality House art gallery, and a flower arranging committee. They also organize a summer performing arts program and a handicapped children's gardening program.

The Guild has also made large financial contributions toward the maintenance and improvement of the Gardens, including $10,000 last year to offset losses imposed by passage of Prop. 13.

BONANZA PROFITS

Baldwin Bonanza IX became part of history with the final accounting reported at the June California Arboretum Foundation meeting.

The Mav 6 plant sale was visited by about 9,000 persons and yielded a record net profit of $53,000. Proceeds will be used for Arboretum operating expenses.

The current president joins with past presidents of the Descanso Guild in proudly displaying the Les Tupper award which recognizes contributions made to the community by the Guild during their years of leadership. Guild presidents are (from left) Mary (Mrs. Richard Hale) Smith, Nancy Dunn, Randy (Mrs. Edward) McDonald (current president), Barbara (Mrs. John C.) Crowley, and Margaret Anne (Mrs. Rodney) Rood.

(*LASCA continues after page 36*)

PLANT PORTRAITS

Gardenia

By Gary Cromwell

GARDENIAS RANK AMONG the most popular of ornamental flowering shrubs in history, along with the rose, the camellia, and the hibiscus. Their gleaming white flowers and spicelike fragrance have charmed men and women of many world cultures. King Edward VII of England was said to seldom have been without a gardenia in his coat lapel.

Gardenia species, once commonly called cape-jasmine, are members of the madder family (Rubiaceae) and are taxonomically grouped with such notable plants as coffee *(Coffea),* quinine *(Cinchona),* and false baby's breath *(Galium).* The genus was named by John Ellis in 1761 in honor of Alexander Garden, a physician and botanist from South Carolina. Dr. Garden was an associate of Carolus Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist and father of our modern binomial system for classifying plants and animals.

Many of the approximately 250 species of gardenias are widespread naturally throughout tropical areas of the Old World and to a lesser extent in the New World. Such locations include portions of southern and western tropical Africa, India, Cambodia, China, Japan, the Philippines, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo, the Hawaiian Islands, and the Fijian area of the South Pacific. In the western hemisphere, gardenias are native to such tropical areas as Guyana and Brazil. A few species have been successfully introduced into temperate regions of the world where they are grown outdoors in milder areas such as California and Florida and under glass in colder climates.

Gardenias range from evergreen shrubs less than one foot tall to small trees about 20 feet in height. The glossy, dark to bright green leaves may be opposite or in whorls of three. They vary from one to more than 10 inches long, are obovate to oblanceolate in shape, and have sheathing, truncated, resinous stipules. Flowers are single to double (having about twice the number of

William Aplin

The glossy dark green leaves and waxy white flowers of Gardenia jasminoides *make it a popular garden shrub.*

petals usually associated with the species), white to creamy-white (some are violet or yellow), large (one inch to more than four inches across), waxy, and highly fragrant. The berrylike fruits may be cream-colored to orange or yellow and of variable surface texture. Fruits of many species are hard and are comparable to a large hen's egg in shape and weight.

Although gardenias commonly are known only as ornamental accents in gardens and for their use in floral arrangements, corsages, and boutonnieres, the plants have served mankind for other purposes. These include food, medicine, clothing dyes, pesticides, fish poisons, cosmetics, glue, soap, and for utensils and other carved wooden articles.

The yellowish fruits of *Gardenia brasiliensis* (native to Guyana and Brazil), *G. erubescens* (tropical Africa), and *G. lutea* (Abyssinia and the Blue Nile region of Egypt) are used in soups, sauces, and in other foods by local populations within those geographical areas. The Chinese for centuries have used the flowers of *G. jasminoides* in scenting tea, while the Tahitians perfume coconut oil with flowers of *G. taitensis*.

Parts of the Marala plant *(G. spathulifolia)* have been used for many years in disease-curing ceremonies by occult practitioners among Transvaal tribes of South Africa. Peoples of India, Burma, Assam, and other countries on the southern boundary of the Himalayan Mountains of Asia have employed fruit extracts and resins of *G. campanulata, G. gummifera,* and *G. lucida* for laxatives, to expel intestinal parasites, to cure skin diseases, and to deter flies from infecting open sores on human beings and animals.

The ancient Hawaiians dyed tapa cloth, an unwoven inner bark product of the paper mulberry tree *(Broussonetia papyrifera),* by using the yellow fruit pulp of both *G. brighami* and *G. remyi.* The fruits of *G. kalbreyeri* and *G. thunbergia,* and the seeds of *G. erubescens, G. jovis-tonantis,* and *G. vogelii* have been processed by certain tropical African cultures as a black cosmetic skin dye.

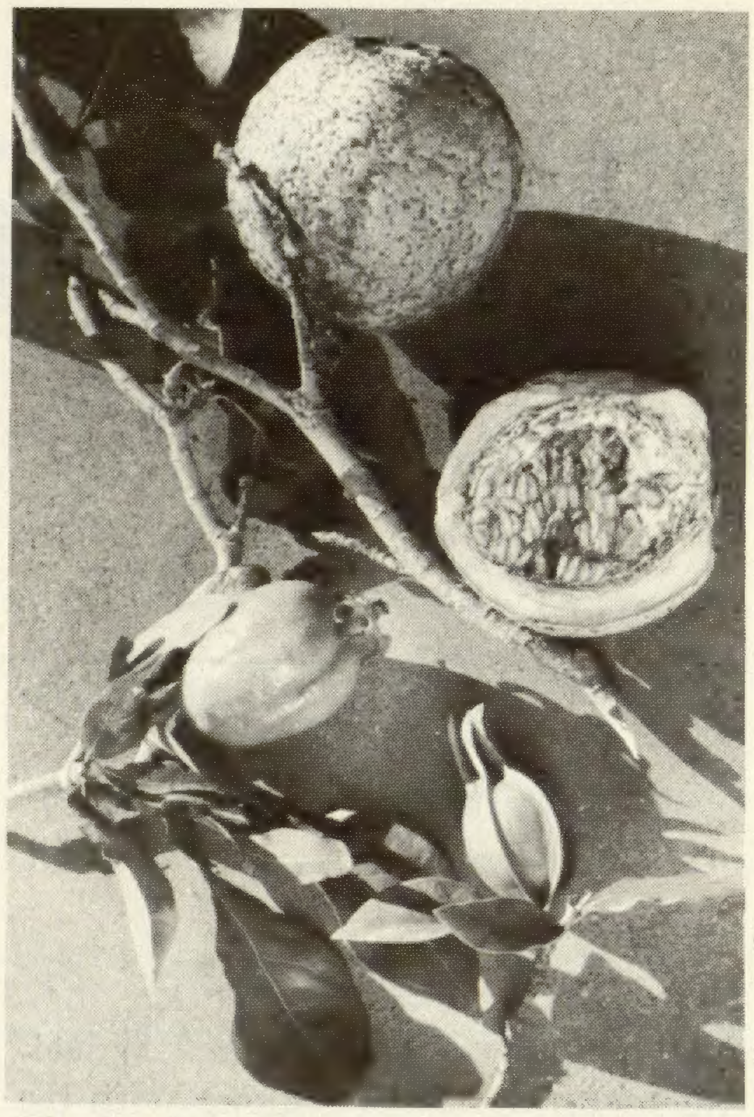
In eastern tropical Africa, women of the Sudan obtain ash from the wood of *G. thunbergia* for soap manufacture and for lye used in processing of dyes. At one time, Hawaiian people collected the gelatinous leaf buds of *G. remyi* and made glue from them. Fish in Asia and Africa were stunned by poisons obtained from *G. campanulata* and from *G. jovis-tonantis,* respectively.

The wood of many arborescent *Gardenia* species is light, dense, even-grained, and pale yellow. From the South Pacific islands to the coasts of Africa, stems of these plants have been harvested for making spoons, knife handles, tools, felloes (rims of spoked wheels), for engraving work, and for numerous other purposes.

The practices of using naturally-scented gardenia flowers and of creating distinctive perfumes from gardenia extracts have continued until modern times. Leis of gardenia flowers are still worn by island peoples in the Pacific, and expensive essences derived from the plants are made available to milady by an international perfume industry.

Of the hundreds of *Gardenia* species, relatively few are utilized by mankind for horticultural purposes. Growing some taxa outside the tropics has not been attempted; a few species have been rejected because they are less attractive than others. Perhaps many have not been introduced into cultivation because of their specialized growth requirements and sensitivity to a harsher temperate climate.

Botanic gardens may include only about a dozen species and varieties in their collections, and these usually are grown for their fragrant flowers and attractive foliage. Four contemporary international favorites, all cultivars of *Gardenia jasminoides,* are 'Mystery,' 'August Beauty,' 'Veitchii,' and 'Radicans.' In addition to having all four of these, the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum also grows 'King Midas,' a fifth cultivated variety of this species. Four of the five cultivars are represented by a group of plantings west of the



William Aplin

The hard spherical fruit of Gardenia thunbergia *develops from the flower's ovary and is of economic importance.*

Tropical Greenhouse, near an old pepper tree. These range from less than one foot to about three feet in height. Specimens of 'Veitchii' are located just west of the fountain in the Home Demonstration area, and adjacent to the road west of the Meadowbrook section. Many of these shrubs flower in summer or in mid-winter.

The Arboretum also grows representatives of other *Gardenia* species, including *G. jasminoides* (synonym, *G. florida;* common gardenia), *G. cornuta, G. globosa, G. spathulifolia,* and *G. thunbergia.* Visitors may view three to five-foot specimens of *G. jasminoides* in two locations, northwest of the South African section storage building and near the Meadowbrook area, west of the road leading to the waterfall. *G. jasminoides* has glossy bright green leaves, medium-gray bark, and numerous fine branches. Eight to ten-foot examples of *G. cornuta* may be seen in two areas of the South African section, west of the Peacock Pavilion. These plants have medium green leaves, stout branches, and slightly rough whitish-gray bark. Three spe-

Flowers of Gardenia spathulifolia *have a characteristic elongate corolla tube and a slight fragrance.*

William Aplin

A native of South Africa, Gardenia cornuta *has stout branches and obovate leaves.*

cimens of G. *globosa*, from seven to nine feet tall, are growing on the eastern slope of Tallac Knoll south of the Coach Barn. These have numerous stout branches and solitary terminal flowers.

Six-foot and 12-foot specimens of *G. spathulifolia* are situated close to other species in the South African section near the storage building and in a spot about 50 yards northwest of the Queen Anne Cottage, respectively. This species has stout smooth branches and spoon-shaped leaves. Shrubs of *G. thunbergia* may be seen north of the groundcover demonstration plots west of the Tropical Greenhouse.

One must use care in growing gardenias. They do best in acidic soils (pH 5.0 to 5.5) which contain high percentages of organic material, or humus. They prefer cool (but not cold), sunny to lightly-shaded moist locations in either house or garden. The plants must not be subjected to overwatering or to excessively hot dry conditions for an extended period. If not properly attended, gardenias may suffer from a variety of diseases or attacks by pests. These include stem canker (caused by a fungus, *Phomopsis gardeniae),* leaf spot, sooty mold, root knot (caused by nematodes), and multiple problems due to white flies, mealy bugs, scale insects, red spider mites, and leaf-rolling moth larvae. Neglected plants may also exhibit iron chlorosis and bud drop.

Gardenias may be grown as foundation plants or as potted specimens. The plants may be propagated by grafting, stem tip or leaf cuttings, or by seeds. However, cuttings are generally preferred for propagation in California. Grafting studies indicate that *G. thunbergia* is a good pathogen-resistant rootstock for propagation work by the home gardener.

Gary Cromwell is a biologist, ethnobotanist, and taxonomist in the Department's Research division.

Fall Garden Fair

at the

Los Angeles State and County Arboretum

Saturday and Sunday, October 27-28, 1979

Demonstrations Children's Gardening Contest Plant Clinics

Specialty Plant Sale Plant Society Exhibits

Discover the Arboretum Walks

Presented by

California Arboretum Foundation & Los Angeles State and County Arboretum

LOS ANGELES STATE AND COUNTY ARBORETUM, Arcadia

SEPTEMBER 22, 23—10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Akebono Bonsai Show
Presented by the Akebono Bonsai Society

SEPTEMBER 23—10 a.m.
Sunday Morning Walk
"Tallac Knoll"
Dr. Leonid Enari, Arboretum biologist
Presented by California Arboretum Foundation

SEPTEMBER 23 — 2 p.m.
Sunday Afternoon Talk
"Growing Winter Annuals"
Ron Call, Arboretum education specialist
Presented by California Arboretum Foundation

SEPTEMBER 28—5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m.
Queen Anne Frolic, a fund-raising event
Sponsored by California Arboretum Foundation

OCTOBER 14—10 a.m.
Sunday Morning Walk
"Trees in Historical Area"
Gary Cromwell, Arboretum biologist
Presented by California Arboretum Foundation

OCTOBER 14—2 p.m.
Sunday Afternoon Talk
"Growing Bulbs in Containers"
Charles Lee, Arboretum horticultural consultant
Presented by California Arboretum Foundation

OCTOBER 20—1 p.m.-5 p.m.
Iris Show
Presented by Southern California Iris Society

OCTOBER 27, 28 — 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Fall Garden Fair, a plant information day
Presented by California Arboretum Foundation

NOVEMBER 3, 4 — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Novice Bonsai Show
Presented by Santa Anita Bonsai Society

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 18—2 p.m.
Sunday Afternoon Talk
"Culture and Identification of Ferns"
Tim Lorman, Arboretum horticulturist
Presented by California Arboretum Foundation

DESCANSO GARDENS, La Canada

SEPTEMBER 15, 16—
Sat. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Sun. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Shade Plant Sale
Presented by Southern California Camellia Council

SEPTEMBER 16—10 a.m.
Sunday Morning Walk
"Trees of Descanso Gardens"
George Lewis, Descanso superintendent
Presented by Descanso Gardens Guild

NOVEMBER 4—2 p.m.
Sunday Afternoon Talk
"Composting"
George Lewis, Descanso superintendent
Presented by Descanso Gardens Guild

NOVEMBER 3, 4—9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Chrysanthemum Show
Presented by Glendale Chrysanthemum Society

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN, Palos Verdes Peninsula

SEPTEMBER 9—10 a.m.
Sunday Morning Walk
"Fall Flower Color"
Armand Sarinana, South Coast superintendent
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

SEPTEMBER 16—2 p.m.
Art of Ikebana—Japanese Flower Arranging
Reiko Kawamura
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

SEPTEMBER 23—2 p.m.
"Methods of Plant Nutrition"
Dr. V. Tuli, formerly of U.C. Irvine
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

SEPTEMBER 30—2 p.m.
"Herbs for Cooking"
Presented by South Bay Herb Society

OCTOBER 7—2 p.m.
Sunday Afternoon Talk
"Indoor Container Gardening"
Edward Hartnagel, assistant superintendent
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

OCTOBER 14—2 p.m.
Rhododendron Culture Lecture and Demonstration
Presented by Southern California Rhododendron Society

OCTOBER 20, 21—
Sat. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Sun. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Rose Show
Presented by South Coast Rose Society

OCTOBER 27, 28—10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Bonsai Show
Presented by Bonsai Society

NOVEMBER 4—10 a.m.
Sunday Morning Walk
"Australian Native Plants in California"
Edward Hartnagel, assistant superintendent
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

NOVEMBER 4—2 p.m.
"Trees for Small Yards, Patios and Pool Areas"
Eric Lorimore, nurseryman and horticulturist
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation

NOVEMBER 11—2 p.m.
Wreathmaking demonstration
Presented by South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation